

Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-14

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DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4551

INFO CINCPAC HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 10374

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR, TH

SUBJECT : EUGENE ROSTOW CONVERSATION WITH RTG

FORMER FONMIN THANAT

CINCPAC ALSO PASS POLAD

1. EUGENE V. ROSTOW MET WITH FORMER RTG FONMIN THANAT KHOMAN IN LATE JUNE IN BANGKOK. ACCORDING TO ROSTOW, HE TOOK THE OCCASION TO ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE THANAT THAT US WOULD NOT DISENGAGE FROM SEA AND THEREBY TURN AREA OVER TO SOVIET-CHINESE RIVALRY.

2. WHEREAS THANAT MAINTAINED THAT HE INTERPRETED THE NIXON DOCTRINE AS INDICATION OF U.S. INTENT TO WITHDRAW FROM SEA, ROSTOW DISAGREED AND COMMENTED THAT NIXON DOCTRINE WAS EXPOUNDED IN MANY FULLY CONSIDERED DOCUMENTS, AND IMPLICIT IN PATTERN OF U.S. ACTION SINCE TIME DOCTRINE WAS FIRST FORMULATED AND, ABOVE ALL, IN INSISTENCE ON COMPLETE ENFORCEMENT OF JANUARY 1973 VIETNAM CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT. ROSTOW POINTED TO PRESIDENT'S RECENTLY SUCCESSFUL VETO OF CESSATION CAMBODIAN BOMBING RIDER AS EVIDENCE EXECUTIVE BRANCH IS DETERMINED NOT REPEAT EARLIER MISTAKE OF FAILING TO OBTAIN COMPLIANCE WITH 1962 GENEVA AGREEMENT. ROSTOW SAID THAT, IN HIS JUDGMENT, DECISIVE MOMENT WAS AT HAND RE THIS MATTER AND THAT EFFORT TO SOLVE PROBLEM BY
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POLITICAL MEANS REACHED CLIMAX IN RECENT NIXON-BREZHNEV TALKS. THANAT WAS DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, THAT US WOULD RESUME

BOMBING OR TAKE OTHER MILITARY ACTIONS AGAINST NVN IF USSR AND PRC WOULD NOT OR COULD NOT INDUCE COMPLIANCE WITH AGREEMENT ON PART OF HANOI. IF THE US DID, IN FACT, RESORT TO MILITARY ACTION AGAINST NVN, THANAT HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE MOUNTED ONLY FROM GUAM OR US FLEET.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THANAT'S EXPRESSED DOUBTS CONCERNING CONTINUED VITALITY OF SEATO TREATY, ROSTOW CALLED ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT'S REPEATED STATEMENTS THAT ALL US COMMITMENTS WERE OPERATIVE, TO CONSEQUENCES WORLD-WIDE IF US COMMITMENTS LOST THEIR DETERRENT POWER AND, PARTICULARLY, TO CONSEQUENCES FOR SEA, AND FOR IMPORTANT US INTERESTS, IF US DID WITHDRAW AND TURN AREA OVER TO SOVIET-CHINESE RIVALRY.

4. THANAT ALSO RAISED POSSIBILITY OF SEA NEUTRALIZATION, INCLUDING NVN, BACKED BY ALL MAJOR POWERS. WHILE THANAT SAID THAT HE HAD NO ILLUSIONS ON THE SUBJECT, HE THOUGHT IT WAS NOW POSSIBLE IN LONG RUN. ROSTOW COMMENTED THAT THE PROSPECT FOR SEA NEUTRALIZATION WOULD BE ENHANCED BY COMPLETE COMPLIANCE WITH THE VIETNAM CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT.

5. THANAT SAID THAT HE WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT HE WAS NOT ANTI-AMERICAN, NOR WAS HE ADVOCATING DRASTIC AND SUDDEN US MILITARY WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND. HE CONCLUDED HIS REMARKS BY STATING THAT HE WOULD WRITE AN ARTICLE SHORTLY URGING ENFORCEMENT OF THE JANUARY CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT, INCLUDING A CONCERTED EFFORT BY OTHER SEA COUNTRIES TOWARD THIS END, TO SUPPLEMENT THE US' EFFORTS WITH THE MAJOR POWERS. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT HANOI WOULD RESPOND TO THIS UNITED POLITICAL PRESSURE.

6. NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR INFORMED CHARGE THAT THANAT HAD BEEN MUCH IMPRESSED WITH ROSTOW'S ARGUMENTS. THANAT INFORMED NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR THAT HE FOUND ROSTOW'S ASSURANCES THAT US WOULD CONTINUE AS POWER IN ASIA AND MAINTAIN ROLE IN SEA MOST PERSUASIVE--PARTICULARLY IN VIEW ROSTOW'S HIGHRANKING RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMER DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION. (COMMENT: HIS TALK WITH ROSTOW OBVIOUSLY GAVE THANAT SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT, BUT WE WOULD
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NOT JUDGE ON BASIS THIS ONE REPORT THAT HIS BASIC VIEWS WERE CHANGED.)
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NNN

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